

**Site Visit Review Team Report**

**Office Registrar and Academic Records**

**2014-2015 Program Review Phase II**

**Salt Lake Community College**

**Prepared by**

**Kristin Benson, Interim Registrar, Portland Community College**  
**Jan Young, Academic Records and Registration Director, Utah State University Eastern**  
**Jeff Aird, Assistant Vice President, Strategy and Analysis, Salt Lake Community College**

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## Introduction

This site visit report for the Office of the Registrar and Academic Records (ORAR) at Salt Lake Community College was prepared by three external reviewers based on a two-day site visit, the department's Phase II self-study report, a survey of the department's web pages, and review of ORAR's Phase I self-study report. Phase II of ORAR's program review covered the following units: Registrar's office, the Assistant Registrar's office, Outgoing Transcripts, Residency, and School of Applied Technology Student Records Management. The observations gleaned during the site visit are limited to the information provided by those individuals who were interviewed and may not reflect all points of view or perspectives. The department's self-study report was submitted to the review team on February 2nd, 2015 and the site visit took place on February 23rd and 24th, 2015.

During the site visit, the review team was able to meet and interview the following Salt Lake Community College administrators, staff, and faculty:

Dr. Nancy Singer, Interim VP of Student Services  
Eric Weber, Assistant VP for Enrollment Services  
MaryEtta Chase, Registrar  
Janet Felker, Program Review Coordinator  
Ologa Iopu, Assistant Registrar  
Ryan Levesque, Transcript Specialist  
Abbey Mann, Residency Officer  
Ken Scott, Program Analyst  
Jonathan Soto, Program Analyst  
Scott Pratt, Program Analyst  
Zach Zitterkof, Web Developer  
Jill Kemerer, School Relations Director  
Sonia Parker, Advising Director  
Lee Martinez, Business Advisor  
Elizete Bond, Hispanic Student Advisor  
Vanessa Elliot, Veteran Services Coordinator  
Cristi Millard, Financial Aid Director  
Michelle Walton, Financial Aid, Assistant Director  
Patty Clifford, Financial Aid Advisor  
Jude Higgins, Faculty Teaching Learning Center & Assistant Professor of History  
Bill Zoumadakis, CIO  
Jourdan McCall, Director Computing Information Technology  
Larry Larsen, Manager of Administrative Applications  
Shannon McWilliams, South Region Student Services Director  
Desi Nielsen, Student Services Specialist  
Kathie Campbell, North Region Student Services Director  
Lee Stevens, Student Services Specialist  
Alison Putnam, Student Services Specialist  
Carrie Riley, Assistant Registrar, SAT Student Records Management  
Gay Bryant, SAT Financial Aid Coordinator  
Kevin Brokeback, Dean of SAT  
Eric Heister, Associate Dean of SAT  
Franz Feuerbach, Director of Operations of SAT

LA Dawn Myra, Transcript Evaluation Coordinator  
Joyce Hendricks, Data Center Coordinator  
Linda Rilke, Graduation Supervisor  
Shirley Brock, Student Express Supervisor  
Denise Clausen, Academic Records Specialist

### **Program Review Standards**

The review team evaluated the Office of the Registrar and Academic Records (ORAR) according to seven standards based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. For each standard, the review team provides within this report specific feedback including areas of strength (commendation) and areas for improvement (recommendation), along with some specific approaches to consider for improvement.

#### Standard One: Department Mission, Goals, and Outcomes

*The department has a mission and overarching goals/outcomes statements which are consistent with and which support the College's and Student Services' mission statements and goals.*

ORAR's mission reads as follows:

- We assist, educate and empower our students, staff, faculty and community.
- We are committed to provide quality customer service in a caring and equitable manner.
- We provide access to a diverse collection of information and resources.
- We strive to be knowledgeable and comply with state and federal regulation and College policy and procedure.

The review team is concerned that this statement is too vague and could describe almost any department at any college in the nation. The goals outlined by ORAR better describe the unique role the department plays within Student Services at SLCC.

The review team recommends that ORAR develop a clear mission statement and service and learning outcomes that are aligned with Student Services priorities. The department will need time and support from senior leadership in order to develop this important foundation. Once a clear mission statement and priorities, which are aligned with those of the larger Division and the College, are established, ORAR can develop a strategic plan that will frame and focus the work for the next several years. The strategic plan should reflect how ORAR strategically facilitates student learning, success, and completion.

One approach to consider is to bring together all staff members in ORAR and regional campus Student Services staff for a half-day retreat where the team can use the results of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 program reviews to craft a new mission statement, refine goals, outline strategic priorities, and map the priorities to those of the Student Services Division and the College.

## Standard Two: Programs and Services

*The department provides a set of core programs/services which are central to and consistent with the department's mission and goals. These programs/services are responsive to the needs of the department's constituents, are cost-effective and, when appropriate, are supported by other departments or agencies both within and outside the College.*

This program review focused on several programs and services within ORAR:

- Registrar and Assistant Registrar Responsibilities
- Residency Office
- Outgoing Transcript Office
- SAT Student Records Management

The review team found these services and programs to be central to ORAR's departmental goals in light of current organizational structures within Student Services. The review team found ORAR's programs very responsive to the needs of its constituents. Specifically, the team commends Ryan on the turn-around time for sending outgoing transcripts. Although the process is a manual one, large volumes of transcripts are sent within a couple of days of each request. The Residency Office has worked hard to better serve students through an innovative online residency application process. The Next Step program is an exciting opportunity to increase student completion and dovetails nicely with other functions within ORAR. Finally, the review team was pleased to hear that faculty feel supported by ORAR, something that is not often heard at colleges and universities. MaryEtta was commended by faculty interviewed for how well she shares information and offers trainings to faculty. The faculty representatives also mentioned that if ORAR stopped delivering rosters and instead directed faculty to Banner Self-Service that most faculty would be able to transition without a problem. ORAR might consider offering a link in Banweb where faculty can download their rosters as an Excel spreadsheet; faculty track their attendance via the spreadsheet.

Aspects of this standard that could use improvement are cost-effectiveness and support from other departments. The review team was surprised by how much of ORAR's budget is spent on printing and postage. Also, the way in which web pages are designed direct students to the most time and resource-consuming options first and to low-cost online solutions last. A redesign of ORAR's web pages so that they direct students to automated and online options first -- and paper forms last -- should free up staff time to focus on other student, faculty, and strategic needs.

The other part of this standard that could be explored further is how ORAR is supported by other departments. The review team was pleased that ORAR is supported by Human Resources in terms of the administration of required FERPA training and that SAT Student Records Management has tremendous support from the SAT administrators.

ORAR could be better supported by Student Services at the North and South Region campuses, and vice versa. There is opportunity to cross-train and monitor staff at these locations on some processes and transactions currently being handled only at the Redwood campus. For example, perhaps regional campus staff can update students' residency statuses when only proof of a driver's license is required.

ORAR has a real opportunity to build strong relationships with regional campus staff. Strong relationships can facilitate cross-training, shared knowledge, and regular updates. It is important that

regional campus staff hear about ORAR updates from the department directly: one Regional Director learned about the new online Student ID retrieval functionality from a student.

There are a few areas that could better support ORAR and vice versa. The review team found that some stakeholders felt left out of conversations and ORAR decisions and were most concerned when those decisions had a significant impact on their area. Because the team heard this from several departments, we think it could be a great opportunity to make external communication one of ORAR's strategic priorities for the coming years. In that vein, we recommend that ORAR engage stakeholders in conversations before policy or procedure changes are made. We also recommend building relationships at other campuses to develop and empower regional campus Student Service staff to grow into new duties and responsibilities.

Finally, we recommend that the registrar, assistant vice president for enrollment services, and the vice president for student services make visible to the College the role of Registrar and ORAR and the accountabilities endemic to their work. Doing so will empower ORAR to enforce policy and lessen the culture of granted appeals and exceptions. While the review team was impressed that the value "Students first and foremost" is displayed for staff and students to reference, it found that College staff are used to exceptions being granted to students. An overreliance on a culture of *individual* success and less reliance on a *system* of student success and development creates processes and transactions that diminish student responsibility, increase staff workloads, and compromises the integrity and fairness of students' records.

One suggestion to address some of above recommendations would be to hold an "Appeal Summit" with stakeholders (Bursar, Academics, Advising, Fin Aid, etc.) to determine the best way to approach appeals and uphold academic integrity. Consider having Bursar handle any request that has to do with money as reversing changes and refunding money is not core to the mission and goals of a registrar's office. This would include admission fee refunds and appeals for registration refunds.

### Standard Three: Leadership and Staffing

*The department has a sufficient number of well-qualified employees (professional, support, student) to effectively provide the core programs/services offered by the department. Employees have clear and current job responsibilities. Employees are oriented to their roles, receive appropriate leadership and supervision, are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities, and are regularly evaluated.*

The review team was extremely impressed with ORAR in light of this standard. ORAR staff are clearly dedicated, committed to students, and work well as a team. MaryEtta is to be commended on her team leadership. Her dedication to internal communication and trainings, and her expectation that her staff engage with campus events monthly, is an asset to her team and the College. She also offers many professional development opportunities and engages her staff in a way that has positively impacted morale. The department plans to meet more frequently in order to keep all staff abreast of new changes. More frequent meetings with the regional campuses are also underway.

The review team also commends MaryEtta on the integration of SAT Records Management into ORAR. It was evident during the site visit that Carrie (Assistant Registrar for SAT Student Records Management) has strong relationships with both ORAR and with the SAT Deans and Directors. It is evident that the SAT

Student Records Management team is dedicated to making the new competency-based programs work with regards to data integrity and reporting.

There are many potential changes on the horizon for ORAR, especially in terms of the possible creation of an Admissions Office. Should an Admissions Office come to fruition, the review team recommends that Student Services consider moving Student Express, Residency, and the Data Center over to the new Admissions Office. The reasons are twofold: 1) these units will make more sense within an Admissions Office and 2) MaryEtta currently has more direct reports than is ideal for an effective manager. ORAR will likely need to retain some functions currently housed in the Data Center such as name, address, and major changes, among others. Whether or not Residency remains in ORAR, the team recommends that the admission application be designed to accommodate a variety of residency exceptions so that residency appeals are minimized.

The review team suggests, once a decision is made about an Admissions Office and whether or not some of MaryEtta's units will be moved, that ORAR consider creating units based on skills sets (e.g., Graduation, the Next Step program, and Incoming Transcripts; Outgoing transcripts and Enrollment Verifications) and merge as appropriate and cross-train to create a more blended staffing model. Currently, most units involve only one type of work, which may potentially limit productivity and coverage. A blended staffing model will allow variety and cross-training in the work and allow two or more units to become one under a single manager. This will create managerial FTE should budget requests to add new managerial FTE not get approved. Or, it may free up FTE to be placed at the hourly level to help with peak times, additional cross-training, or collaboration with departments outside of ORAR (e.g., advising, financial aid, etc.).

Whether the FTE comes from blending units within ORAR or from approved budget requests, the review team strongly recommends two new positions come to ORAR: an administrative assistant for MaryEtta and a Systems Manager to liaison with OIT and Ellucian and to serve as the project manager on all ORAR's technical projects. If a significant amount of Cognos reporting continues to be a part of ORAR's core functions, it is recommended that a single staff member receive comprehensive Cognos training and that person report to the Systems Manager.

Whatever the approach, a dedicated Technical Lead who can manage technical projects is crucial. This was also recommended in the Phase 1 review team report and resulted in an IT staff member being assigned to ORAR; however, soon after, he was put on other projects and was no longer seen as a dedicated ORAR programmer. Both OIT programmers and OIT administrators would strongly support the creation of a functional-technical leadership position in ORAR.

#### Standard Four: Financial Resources and Budget

*The department has a well-defined and participatory budget planning process. This process results in sufficient resources to meet the department's core programs/services, staffing, facility, equipment, and technology needs.*

The budget process described in the self-study and the funds secured over the past four years are reflective of a well-defined and participatory budget planning process. The review team recommends that future budgetary request and plans align with a revised ORAR mission statement (see standard one) and corresponding strategic plan.

### Standard Five: Facilities, Equipment and Technology

*The department has safe, accessible, and current physical facilities, equipment, and technological resources to support its core programs/services and personnel.*

The area of facilities and technological resources was a central theme in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 ORAR program review reports. Because the review team recommends a complete review of the department's mission, goals, and overall structure, it did not focus on the department's physical space as the core functions of the department may change with the emergence of an Admissions Office or a blended staffing model.

An area of focus for ORAR should be how it relates to its current technological resources and future technological needs. As mentioned above, the team recommends that MaryEtta work with HR and other stakeholders to develop a new classification of Systems Manager. Ideally, the classification should be written so that it can be scaled across the college. ORAR is in a great position to pilot this new classification. A 21st century registrar's office must be technologically savvy but if there's not sufficient time dedicated to learning new technology, it is imperative that there is a dedicated staff member, such as a Systems Manager, to keep up with technological advancements and to bridge the knowledge gap between ORAR and OIT.

In order to determine technological and staffing needs, ORAR staff should conduct desk audits to determine inefficiencies and to propose process, policy, or staffing changes to streamline and enhance service to students. Some questions to consider during the desk audits: Is this step necessary? Is this form necessary? Can this be moved online so that students can do this themselves? Does this task really belong in another area of ORAR or in another department altogether? What truly needs to be archived and what can simply be filed or shredded? What is the average processing time? The desk audit data can also serve as benchmark data when setting goals around productivity and service.

Once the foundation work of reviewing ORAR's mission and goals -- and a strategic plan has been created -- the review team recommends that ORAR create a technology plan instead of a technology wish list. A technology plan that plots out needed resources, budget, timelines, and champions will allow the department, and partnering departments such as OIT, to prioritize and manage active projects. A "parking lot" for wish list ideas could be kept within ORAR until the time is right to create a project plan in concert with the stakeholders related to the specific project. This will help to ensure that stakeholders are engaged when technological projects that may impact them are in early stages of development.

Finally, ORAR, along with the College as a whole, should work to create clearly defined, documented, and communicated data processes and standards. It is concerning to the review team that students' academic records can be amended long after the record was created, in some cases ten years after the term in question has ended. It is also concerning that students can be added to a course not only late in the semester but even after the semester has ended. While there may be some concern about data integrity if tasks are shared with regional campus staff, data audits programmed and ran in Cognos would allow ORAR to monitor transactions performed at the regional campuses.

Standards for the use of data fields, formatting, data transmission, and timeframes for the altering or amending of students' records are crucial to ensuring that data will be useful to the department and the College. They also ensure that students are being treated equitably and fairly with regards to their academic records.

### Standard Six: Ethical and Legal Responsibilities

*The department is aware of and compliant with statutory and professional ethical and legal standards which apply to the department's core programs/services, personnel, facilities, equipment and technology.*

Per its self-study report, ORAR adheres to federal regulations; Utah State and Board of Regents Policy; College, Student Service, and ORAR policy and guidelines; and best practices as outlined by professional organizations in the field. The review team was impressed that FERPA training at the College was mandatory. One example of how well ORAR designs processes in light of FERPA is the grade change process, which requires instructors to communicate directly to a designated email (facultygradechange@slcc.edu). In addition, instructors are required to send the grade change request from the official SLCC email outlook account. Once the grade change has been processed, a confirmation email is emailed back to instructor. In order to confirm the instructor email is from the official SLCC email account, the email address is confirmed by identifying the instructor through the SLCC Outlook directory. The confirmation email is not returned to the original email; it is sent to the instructor's email as designated in the SLCC Outlook directory. For additional security, the Department is copied on the confirmation email.

### Standard Seven: Assessment and Evaluation

*The department has clearly defined and measurable core program/service and student learning outcomes which are consistent with the department's mission and goal statements. These program/service and student learning outcomes are regularly assessed through both direct and indirect measures, and the results of assessment are shared among constituents and are used for decision-making and planning.*

ORAR is clearly dedicated to assessment and evaluation endeavors as evidenced by its self-study report and participation in the program review process. Additionally, as a Student Services unit, the department engages in annual assessments during non-program review years.

While there was mention of student learning outcomes in ORAR's self-study report, the outcomes that were described in connection to ORAR were outdated. The review team recommends that, once the department's mission and goals are reviewed, student learning outcomes and departmental service outcomes be identified. The outcomes should serve as the backbone of future assessment and evaluation efforts. In addition to the self-reflective process that was used to create the Phase 2 self-study report, the team recommends that additional assessment measures be used including surveys of students and other stakeholders (e.g., advisors, faculty, deans, etc.), Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analyses, desk audits, and force field analyses. If future program reviews include these more direct measures, the data can be used to determine strategic goals and priorities going forward.

### **Conclusion**

The Office of the Registrar and Academic Records at Salt Lake Community College is a strong, dedicated, and knowledgeable team. It is evident that students truly matter to this department. Several changes

were made as a result of the Phase 1 self-study process, which reflects nimble and responsive leadership in MaryEtta and her team.

Below is a summary of the commendations and recommendations from the review.

### Commendations

- ORAR is staffed by a dedicated and passionate staff. They work well as a team and are clearly committed to their students.
- There is a strong culture of internal communication and professional development within ORAR. From monthly campus events, to frequent internal meetings to regular professional development, there is a strong pattern of connection, communication, and respect. It is evident that MaryEtta is an engaged and supportive leader that positively contributes to her staff's morale and commitment.
- Outgoing transcript turn-around time is impressive considering the many manual aspects of the process.
- Faculty representatives feel that faculty are supported by ORAR. MaryEtta is great at providing information and regular training to faculty.
- ORAR displays innovation with its online application for change in residency status.
- ORAR has successfully integrated SAT Records Management into ORAR, while allowing SAT Student Records Management to maintain strong ties and relationships with SAT administration.

### Recommendations

- ORAR should develop a clear mission statement and student learning and services outcomes that are aligned with Student Services priorities. They need time and support from senior leadership to develop these foundations and to develop a strategic plan. As a department, ORAR need to determine how it strategically facilitates student learning, success, and completion.
- ORAR (and SLCC as a whole) should develop clearly defined, documented, and communicated data processes and standards. ORAR needs to engage stakeholders when changes in policy or processes that will affect data and data standards is being considered.
- ORAR should enforce policy and the lessen culture of granted appeals and exceptions. SLCC staff and students are used to a culture of exceptions. There seems to be an over-reliance on a culture of individual success and less reliance on system of student success and development.
- ORAR should work with Human Resources and other stakeholders to develop a new classification such as Systems Manager. This new classification should be written so that it can be scaled across the College.
- ORAR should conduct desk audits to determine inefficiencies and to propose process, policy or staffing changes that will streamline services to students.
- Once foundation of mission and strategic plan created, ORAR should create a technology plan in lieu of technology wish list.
- ORAR should make external communication a strategic priority. For example, ORAR should engage stakeholders in conversations before policy or procedure changes are made; build relationships with partner departments and regional campus staff; and make visible the role of Registrar and ORAR and the accountabilities to which they are beholden.

- Hold an “Appeal Summit” with stakeholders (Bursar, Academics, Advising, Fin Aid, etc.) to assess the best way to serve students efficiently and ethically while also ensuring the academic integrity of students’ records.
- Student Services should consider moving Student Express, Residency, and Data Center should an Admissions Office be created.
- MaryEtta should consider reducing the number of direct reports for herself by combining units with similar functions under a single manager.
- ORAR should consider evaluating its units based on skills sets (e.g., Graduation, Next Step Program, and Incoming Transcripts; Outgoing transcripts and Enrollment Verifications) and merge as appropriate and cross-train to create a more blended staffing model.
- ORAR should create the position and hire a Systems Manager to liaison with OIT and to manage technical projects and Cognos reporting.
- MaryEtta should hire an administrative assistant for herself.